

Message Text

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ACTION ARA-10

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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PFOR, BL, CI

SUBJ: POLITICAL SPECULATION OVER BANZER-PINOCHEZ MEETING

1. GOB ANNOUNCEMENT THAT PRESIDENT BANZER HAD ACCEPTED INVITATION OF CHILEAN PRESIDENT PINOCHEZ TO MEET FEBRUARY 8 ON BOLIVIA-CHILE BORDER TOOK LA PAZ POLITICAL CIRCLES BY SURPRISE. SUBSEQUENTLY, MOST POLITICAL SPECULATION HAS CENTERED ABOUT PROSPECTS FOR A RESUMPTION OF BILATERAL DIPLOMATIC RELATIONS, BROKEN ON APRIL 19, 1962 BY BOLIVIA OVER CHILE'S DIVERSION OF THE WATERS OF THE LAUCA RIVER. MORE LIKELY THAN ANY IMMEDIATE RESUMPTION OF DIPLOMATIC TIES, HOWEVER, IS SOME MEASURE ON CHILE'S PART TO IMPROVE CONDITIONS AT ARICA FOR BOLIVIAN EXPORT-IMPORT TRADE. APPARENT LACK OF A FIXED GOB AGENDA FOR THIS HURRIEDLY-ARRANGED MEETING IMPLIES THAT DISCUSSION WILL BE WIDE-RANGING AND UNSTRUCTURED.

2. MEETING WILL TAKE PLACE ALONG BOLIVIAN-CHILEAN BORDER NEAR CHARANA (BOLIVIA), LOCATED IN A COLD, BARREN PART OF BOLIVIAN ALTIPLANO. DUE TO LACK OF ADEQUATE ACCOM-
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MODATIONS AT CHARANA, BANZER GOVERNMENT HAS ANNOUNCED

THAT SESSION WILL TAKE PLACE IN A RAILROAD CAR PROVIDED BY BOLIVIAN NATIONAL RAILROAD COMPANY (ENFE). ALTHOUGH COMPOSITION OF BANZER'S DELEGATION IS NOT FIXED AS YET, DEFINITE PARTICIPANTS WILL INCLUDE FOREIGN MINISTER GUZMAN SORIANO, FOREIGN MINISTRY SUB-SECRETARY MARCELO OSTRIA AND CHIEF OF JOINT COMMAND OF ARMED FORCES GENERAL OSCAR ADRIAZOLA.

3. COMMENT: GOB ALREADY HAS INDICATED THAT IT WILL BE GUIDED BY "SPIRIT OF AYACUCHO" IN THIS MEETING, REFERRING SPECIFICALLY TO PARAGRAPH IN "DECLARATION OF AYACUCHO" WHICH CALLED ATTENTION TO PROBLEMS CREATED BY BOLIVIA'S LANDLOCKED STATUS. ALTHOUGH BOLIVIA CANNOT HOPE FOR MAJOR PROGRESS TOWARD RESOLUTION OF THIS CENTURY-OLD SITUATION AT THE PRESIDENTIAL MEETING, IT WILL UNDOUBTEDLY PUSH FGR AT LEAST COSMETIC IMPROVEMENTS IN THE PORT SITUATION AT ARICA; OTHER CONCESSIONS MIGHT ALSO BE FORTHCOMING IF CHILE FEELS IMPELLED BY ITS PRESENT INTERNATIONAL ISOLATION TO STRENGTHEN ITS TIES WITH THE IDEOLOGICALLY-SYMPATHETIC BANZER GOVERNMENT.
STEDMAN

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